

developed by Jewish entrepreneurs: Neiman, Marcus, Sanger in Dallas; Battelstein and Sakowitz in Houston; and Joske in San Antonio.

These cities and towns reaped the benefits not only in availability of goods, but also in owners' generous patronage of the fine arts and in contributions to civic life such as the historic Levy Opera House in Hillsboro and the Brin Opera House in Terrell. Other early Jewish Americans who contributed mightily to civic life include Anna Hertzberg, who served as president of the original San Antonio Symphony Orchestra before World War I, and Olga Bernstein Kohlberg of El Paso, who started Texas' first free public kindergarten in 1892. That tradition continues today with the Dell Children's Hospital in Austin established by Dell Computers founder and CEO, Michael Dell.

Mr. Speaker, it was 67 years ago this month that President Truman recognized the free, independent, and democratic State of Israel, making the United States the first country to welcome Israel into the family of nations. And for 65 years Israel and the United States have remained the best of friends and the strongest of allies. One reason for the enduring strength of this relationship is the enduring contributions made by Jewish Americans in enriching American life and culture.

Mr. Speaker, as a representative of the state of Texas which has welcomed Jews for more than three centuries, I join with my colleagues and President Obama in calling upon all Americans to learn more about the heritage and contributions of Jewish Americans and to observe this month with appropriate programs, activities, and ceremonies.

RECOGNIZING WALLACE HIGGINS, RECIPIENT OF THE 2014 CON- GRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL

HON. TOM REED

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 8, 2015

Mr. REED. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a constituent, Mr. Wallace Higgins.

Mr. Higgins was awarded the 2014 Congressional Gold Medal in recognition of his service with the Civil Air Patrol during World War II.

Mr. Higgins was born in Kendall, New York in November 1925. From a young age, he was intrigued by aviation. Mr. Higgins joined the Civil Air Patrol in 1943, during his senior year of high school. Later that year, he enlisted in the Army Air Force and was chosen to join the Tuskegee Airmen.

During his two enlistments with the Army Air Force, Mr. Higgins achieved the rank of Staff Sergeant and earned several commendations for his service, including the WWII Victory Medal, Army Good Conduct Medal, and New York State Medal for Merit. After receiving his honorable discharge, Mr. Higgins settled in Alfred, New York.

Mr. Higgins has dedicated the past six decades to serving his community: he is entering his 50th year with the Alfred Lions Club, he is a life member of the Alfred Station Volunteer Fire Department, he is a member and former chairman of the Allegany County Office for the Aging Advisory Council, and he is a founding

member of the Allegany Senior Foundation, where he currently serves as President Emeritus.

Wallace Higgins truly exemplifies the qualities that characterize the Congressional Gold Medal. It is my pleasure to present this award to Mr. Higgins in recognition of his life-long service to our country and our local community.

UNVEILING THE SOUTHBURY SENIOR CENTER WALL OF HONOR

HON. ELIZABETH H. ESTY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 8, 2015

Ms. ESTY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the unveiling of the Wall of Honor at the Southbury Senior Center.

Today, we recognize the senior citizens from Southbury who proudly served our country in uniform. These men and women answered the call of duty to protect our nation and defend its ideals. They served during war and during peace, at home and abroad. No matter their deployment or their mission, each of our veterans deserves the recognition and accolades they will receive during today's ceremony.

While we can never fully repay our veterans for their service and sacrifice, I believe it is important to take every opportunity to thank and honor them. I hope when the wall is revealed, each veteran will feel the appreciation and gratitude of our community and the entire nation.

I would like to thank Wayne Rioux and the staff and volunteers at Southbury Senior Center for creating this memorial to recognize these local American heroes.

HONORING MILITARY ENLISTEES

HON. LOIS FRANKEL

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 8, 2015

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor thirty high school seniors in Florida's 22nd District who have decided to enlist in the United States Armed Forces.

Of these thirty, four have joined the Army; their names are Margaro Hernandez, Brandon Iglesias, Dylan Reynolds, and Darren Ross.

Sixteen have joined the Marines; their names are Lamech Murzike, Joshua Scott, Connor Bunch, Yeicob Duran, Jose Ribot, Jonnathan Gonzalez, Davie Medina Perez, Kenton Ennis, Jacob Rodriguez, Luis Mendez, Mike-Rodman Lorissaint, Jose Vega, Gregory Spotts, Sean McCusker, Alyssa Pontier, Delone Griffin.

Four have joined the National Guard; their names are Trey Rawls, Merisanda Carstea, Spencer Hickey, and Warren Dutes.

Six have joined the Navy; their names are Destiny Huntley, Marco Juarez Jr., Anthony Lewis, Amanda McCarthy, Sergio Santiago, Pedro Jose Silva.

It is in thanks to the dedication of patriots like these that we are able to meet here today, in the United States House of Representatives, and openly debate the best solutions to

the diverse issues that confront our country. On behalf of myself and all of my constituents in Florida's 22nd District, thank you for your service and best of luck as you pursue this challenging endeavor.

ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, May 8, 2015

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Asian Pacific American Heritage Month. Throughout the history of the United States, Asian American and Pacific Islanders have contributed to our greatest undertakings and our vibrant cultural diversity. They have become leaders in business, in the community, and in politics, overcoming adversity and prejudice in pursuit of the American Dream.

Today, there are more than 20 million Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and more than 1 million of them live in Texas. A majority of them are concentrated in the cities, particularly Houston. At 80,049, the Vietnamese American community in the City of Houston has the third largest in the country. Houston is also home to sizable populations of Chinese Americans, Indian Americans, and Filipino Americans. These communities have transformed the city, bringing their cultures, religions, and businesses and creating a new home.

The first recorded Asian Americans in Texas were 250 Chinese laborers, who came to Houston to work on the railroad in 1870. It was thankless, dangerous work, but they helped to build the backbone of our state's economy. Although many of them would leave soon after the work was done, several stayed behind in Houston, and in the early 1900s the first Chinese business districts were opened.

The Asian American population in Houston remained quite low until the 1970s, when a new wave of immigration brought tens of thousands of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders to the city. Many of these early immigrants were Vietnamese refugees fleeing the country with the aid of the Indochinese Assistance and Refugee Assistance Act of 1975. Others were Chinese, drawn by the growth of the Chinese Merchants' Association throughout the decade.

Today, there are more than 100,000 Asian American and Pacific Islanders living in Houston. As of 2007, they operate 16,000 businesses, and there are multiple temples dedicated to Buddhism, Hinduism, and Sikhism. The city offers official documents in Vietnamese, Chinese, and Urdu. Neighborhoods from Little Saigon to Chinatown to the Mahatma Gandhi District are vibrant community centers for Asian Americans and other residents alike.

But for all their contributions to our state and our country, there are still unacceptable challenges facing Asian American Pacific Islander communities. There is an urgent need to fix our broken immigration system by passing legislation that will support families, strengthen small businesses, protect workers